Reply to Final Office of March 31, 2006   Appl. No.: 10/614,611
Amendment Dated: May 15, 2006   Attorney Docket No.: CSCO-033/7051

Listing of Claims

1   Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method of supporting a user to access a service,

2   said method being performed in a service selection gateway (SSG), said method

3   comprising:

4   receiving in said SSG, data representing a plurality of ~~switching~~ time points, ~~each~~

5   ~~of said plurality of switching points comprising a time point~~;

6   counting in said SSG, a traffic volume from or to each of said plurality of

7   ~~switching~~ time points; and

8   sending from said SSG, an accounting record containing said traffic volume.

1   Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1, wherein each of said

2   plurality of ~~switching~~ time points ~~comprises~~ specifies a corresponding time ~~instance~~ point

3   at which a tariff changes to access said service.

1   Claim 3 (Original): The method of claim 2, wherein said traffic volume comprises

2   an aggregate count of data transferred.

1   Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 2, wherein said traffic volume

2   comprises a marginal count from a previous ~~switching~~ time point, said accounting record

3   further comprising an aggregate count.

1   Claim 5 (Original): The method of claim 4, further comprising maintaining a

2   marginal counter and an aggregate counter to count said marginal count and said

3   aggregate count respectively.

1   Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 4, further comprising:

2   maintaining a single counter to count said aggregate count;

3   storing said aggregate count in a variable at each of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time

4   points; and

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5   computing said marginal count at a time of generating said accounting record by

6   subtracting said variable from said aggregate counter at said time.

1   Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 4, wherein said accounting

2   record is sent at least once in every tariff duration, wherein said tariff duration is between

3   successive ones of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points.

1   Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 7, wherein said plurality of

2   ~~switching~~ time points are specified for each day.

1   Claim 9 (Original): The method of claim 4, wherein said service is billed according

2   to a post-paid model.

1   Claim 10 (Original): The method of claim 4, wherein said traffic volume is

2   associated with a session initiated by said user.

1   Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A machine readable medium carrying one or more

2   sequences of instructions for causing a SSG to support a user to access a service, wherein

3   execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors

4   contained in said SSG causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

5   receiving in said SSG, data representing a plurality of ~~switching~~ time points,

6   ~~wherein each of said switching points comprises a time point;~~

7   counting in said SSG, a traffic volume from or to each of said plurality of

8   ~~switching~~ time points; and

9   sending from said SSG, an accounting record containing said traffic volume.

1   Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The machine readable medium of claim 11,

2   wherein each of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points ~~comprises~~ specifies a

3   corresponding time instance ~~point~~ at which a tariff changes to access said service.

1   Claim 13 (Original): The machine readable medium of claim 12, wherein said
2   traffic volume comprises an aggregate count of data transferred.

1   Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The machine readable medium of claim 12,
2   wherein said traffic volume comprises a marginal count from a previous ~~switching~~ time
3   point, said accounting record further comprising an aggregate count.

1   Claim 15 (Original): The machine readable medium of claim 14, further
2   comprising maintaining a marginal counter and an aggregate counter to count said
3   marginal count and said aggregate count respectively.

1   Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The machine readable medium of claim 14,
2   further comprising:
3   maintaining a single counter to count said aggregate count;
4   storing said aggregate count in a variable at each of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time
5   points; and
6   computing said marginal count at a time of generating said accounting record by
7   subtracting said variable from said aggregate counter at said time.

1   Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The machine readable medium of claim 14,
2   wherein said accounting record is sent at least once in every tariff duration, wherein said
3   tariff duration is between successive ones of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points.

1   Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The machine readable medium of claim 17,
2   wherein said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points are specified for each day of a week.

1   Claim 19 (Original): The machine readable medium of claim 14, wherein said
2   service is billed according to a post-paid model.

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1   Claim 20 (Original): The machine readable medium of claim 14, wherein said

2   traffic volume is associated with a session initiated by said user.

1   Claim 21 (Previously Presented): A service selection gateway (SSG) supporting

2   a user to access a service, said SSG comprising:

3   means for receiving data representing a plurality of ~~switching~~ time points, ~~wherein~~

4   ~~each of said switching points comprises a time point~~;

5   means for counting a traffic volume from or to each of said plurality of ~~switching~~

6   <u>time</u> points; and

7   means for sending an accounting record containing said traffic volume.

1   Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The SSG of claim 21, wherein each of said

2   plurality of ~~switching~~ <u>time</u> points <u>specifies</u> ~~comprises~~ a <u>corresponding time instance</u> ~~point~~

3   at which a tariff changes to access said service.

1   Claim 23 (Original): The SSG of claim 22, wherein said traffic volume comprises

2   an aggregate count of data transferred.

1   Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 22, wherein said traffic volume

2   comprises a marginal count from a previous ~~switching~~ <u>time</u> point, said accounting record

3   further comprising an aggregate count.

1   Claim 25 (Original): The SSG of claim 24, further comprising means for

2   maintaining a marginal counter and an aggregate counter to count said marginal count and

3   said aggregate count respectively.

1   Claim 26 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 24, further comprising:

2   means for maintaining a single counter to count said aggregate count;

3   means for storing said aggregate count in a variable at each of said plurality of

4   ~~switching~~ <u>time</u> points; and

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5   means for computing said marginal count at a time of generating said accounting

6   record by subtracting said variable from said aggregate counter at said time.

1   Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 24, wherein said accounting

2   record is sent at least once in every tariff duration, wherein said tariff duration is between

3   successive ones of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points.

1   Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 27, wherein said plurality of

2   ~~switching~~ time points are specified for each day.

1   Claim 29 (Original): The SSG of claim 24, wherein said service is billed according

2   to a post-paid model.

1   Claim 30 (Original): The SSG of claim 24, wherein said traffic volume is

2   associated with a session initiated by said user.

1   Claim 31 (Currently Amended): A service selection gateway (SSG) supporting a

2   user to access a service, said SSG comprising:

3   a tariff block receiving data representing a plurality of ~~switching~~ time points;

4   ~~wherein each of said switching points comprises a time point;~~

5   a forwarding block forwarding a plurality of packets related to said user;

6   an accounting block counting a traffic volume from or to each of said plurality of

7   ~~switching~~ time points according to said plurality of packets; and

8   an outbound interface sending an accounting record containing said traffic volume.

1   Claim 32 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 31, wherein each of said

2   plurality of ~~switching~~ time points ~~comprises~~ specifies a corresponding time ~~instance~~ point

3   at which a tariff changes to access said service.

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1   Claim 33 (Original): The SSG of claim 32, wherein said traffic volume comprises
2   an aggregate count of data transferred.

1   Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 32, wherein said traffic volume
2   comprises a marginal count from a previous ~~switching~~ time point, said accounting record
3   further comprising an aggregate count.

1   Claim 35 (Original): The SSG of claim 34, wherein said accounting block
2   maintains a marginal counter and an aggregate counter to count said marginal count and
3   said aggregate count respectively.

1   Claim 36 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 34, wherein said accounting
2   block maintains a single counter to count said aggregate count, said accounting block
3   storing said aggregate count in a variable at each of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time
4   points, and computing said marginal count at a time of generating said accounting record
5   by subtracting said variable from said aggregate counter at said time.

1   Claim 37 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 34, wherein said accounting
2   record is sent at least once in every tariff duration, wherein said tariff duration is between
3   successive ones of said plurality of ~~switching~~ time points.

1   Claim 38 (Currently Amended): The SSG of claim 37, wherein said plurality of
2   ~~switching~~ time points are specified for each day.

1   Claim 39 (Original): The SSG of claim 34, wherein said service is billed according
2   to a post-paid model.

1   Claim 40 (Original): The SSG of claim 34, wherein said traffic volume is
2   associated with a session initiated by said user.

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1   Claim 41 (New): The SSG of claim 31, wherein said outbound interface is coupled

2   to a plurality of physical paths, wherein said forwarding block examines a header of each of

3   said plurality of packets to determine the specific one of said plurality of physical paths on

4   which to forward each packet, whereby said SSG operates as a switch in forwarding said

5   packets.

1   Claim 42 (New): The SSG of claim 41, wherein said forwarding block determines said

2   specific one of said plurality of physical paths based on a destination address contained in

3   said header, wherein said SSG operates a router.

1   Claim 43 (New): The method of claim 1, wherein said SSG is coupled to a plurality

2   of physical paths, said method further comprising:

3   receiving a plurality of packets on said plurality of physical paths;

4   examining a header of each of said plurality of paths to determine the specific one of

5   said plurality of physical paths on which to forward the packet; and

6   forwarding each of said plurality of packets on the determined one of said plurality

7   of physical paths,

8   whereby said SSG operates as a switch.

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